Stolen life's poetic revolt

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Stolen Life's Poetic Revolt[1]

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> *The Slave Trade came through the cramped doorway of the slave ship, leaving a wake like that of crawling desert caravans. It might be drawn like this: >---< African countries to the east; the lands of America to the West. This creature is in the image of the fibril. African languages became deterritorialized, thus contributing to creolization in the West. This is the most completely known confrontation between the powers of the written word and the impulses of orality. The only written thing on slave ships was the account book listing the exchange value of slaves. Within the ship's space the cry of those deported was stifled, as it would be in the realm of the Plantations. This confrontation still reverberates to this day.*[2]

Édouard Glissant -- poet, novelist, philosopher -- begins his monumental *Poetics of Relation* with a meditation entitled the 'Open Boat'. The above epigraph, an asterisked note in the text itself, marks his search for a new dissident and relational poetics and centres our attention onto the historical 'ongoingness' of the circum-Atlantic slave trade, the system of chattel and racial slavery that it made possible, and the broader colonial experience in which it is situated.[3] Highlighting the entangled temporality of their past and present, he intimates that the 'ordeal' of the enslaved 'did not die; it quickened into this continuous/discontinuous thing…', a dis/continuity that may be said to mark the 'afterlives' of slavery.[4] Through the prism of the 'abyss' -- the innumerable social, cultural, economic, indeed, *dehumanising* and *humanising* (of some lives) effects of 'New World' slavery -- Glissant reads the 'material histories and memories of the archipelago' as a 'threefold dispossession: of place, of history, of language'.[5] These intersecting dispossessions coalesce in the

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[1] Fred Moten, *Stolen Life* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2018).

[2] Édouard Glissant, *The Poetics of Relation*, trans. Betsy Wing (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997), 5, note.

[3] Slavery imposed by European empires emerged and intensified at a time that forms of slavery and coerced labour diminished within the 'metropoles', *The Rise of African Slavery in the Americas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 4–13. On 'New World' slavery see, Robin Blackburn, *The Making of New World Slavery: From the Baroque to the Modern, 1492-1800*, 2nd edition (London ; New York: Verso, 2010); Stephanie E. Smallwood, *Saltwater Slavery: A Middle Passage from Africa to American Diaspora* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008); David Brion Davis, *Inhuman Bondage: The Rise and Fall of Slavery in the New World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

[4] Glissant, *Poetics*, 7. On 'afterlives', see Saidiya V. Hartman, *Lose Your Mother: A Journey Along the Atlantic Slave Route* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007), 6; Saidiya V. Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self-Making in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997); cf. Jared Sexton, 'People-of-Color-Blindness: Notes on the Afterlife of Slavery', *Social Text* 28, no. 2 (2010): 31–56.

[5] First quote from John E. Drabinski, *Glissant and the Middle Passage: Philosophy, Beginning, Abyss* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2019), Preface, forthcoming. Second quote from Diva Barbaro Damato, 'The Poetics of the Dispossessed', trans. Leila Cristina Darin and Leonina C. Menezes de Souza, *World Literature Today* 63, no. 4 (1989): 606; cf. Glissant, *Poetics*, 5–12. Dispossession of family, history and community was compounded by, for example, the slaves' renaming in the plantations, see Robin D. G. Kelley, 'The Rest of Us: Rethinking Settler and Native', *American Quarterly* 69, no. 2 (2017): 268.

aftermath of African enslavement, that 'theft of the body' that 'turned *personality* into *property*', into fungible commodity, and which sustained six plantation complexes in what would be called South and North America.[6] Attendant to these dispossessions is yet another: the territories that would be called the Americas were being intensely settled by Europeans in a parallel dispossession of life, land, and community of native populations under the principle of 'elimination'.[7]

But what is the meditation on the 'open boat', *for* a poetics of Relation, if not an endeavour to think the 'abyss' as inseparable from an 'impossible generativity' for poetic revolt?[8] For Glissant, the reverberations of slavery are inextricable from flight from, and resistance to, dispossession and suffering, such that poetic intention 'expresses, reveals…[what] the people have not ceased to live in reality'.[9] The historical lifetimes of 'New World' slavery were co-emergent with practices of petit and grande marronage,[10] anti-slavery and anti-colonial struggles, including slave rebellions, and the Haitian Revolution which was all three.[11] More than that, poetic uprising *also* aimed at the

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[6] Quote in Hortense J. Spillers, 'Mama's Baby, Papa's Maybe: An American Grammar Book', *Diacritics* 17, no. 2 (1987): 67 and 78. For a visualisation of the voyages to the plantation complexes, see the digital memorial, databases and other resources detailing an estimated two thirds of total slave ship voyages carrying enslaved Africans, at: URL https://www.slavevoyages.org/. Also see the intra-American Slave Trade pages at https://www.slavevoyages.org/american/about (Accessed 10 March 2019). On fungibility, see Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection*.

[7] Kelley, 'The Rest of Us', 268; Patrick Wolfe, 'Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native', *Journal of Genocide Research* 8, no. 4 (1 December 2006): 387–409; Audra Simpson, *Mohawk Interruptus: Political Life Across the Borders of Settler States* (Durham: Duke University Press Books, 2014); Encarnación Gutiérrez Rodríguez, 'The Coloniality of Migration and the "Refugee Crisis": On the Asylum-Migration Nexus, the Transatlantic White European Settler Colonialism-Migration and Racial Capitalism', *Refuge: Canada's Journal on Refugees* 34, no. 1 (18 June 2018): 16–28. Acknowledging this should assume neither that projects of colonisation and elimination are 'complete' nor that they are in the past, see Bonita Lawrence and Enakshi Dua, 'Decolonizing Anti-Racism', *Social Justice* 32, no. 4 (2005): 128–29.

[8] Fred Moten, 'Knowledge of Freedom', *CR: The New Centennial Review* 4, no. 2 (2004): 276; Sylvia Wynter, 'Beyond the Word of Man: Glissant and the New Discourse of the Antilles', *World Literature Today* 63, no. 4 (1989): 637–48.

[9] Édouard Glissant, *Caribbean Discourse* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1991), 236; cf. Édouard Glissant, 'Creolization in the Making of the Americas', *Caribbean Quarterly* 54, no. 1/2 (2008): 81–89; and, Édouard Glissant, *Poetic Intention*, trans. Nathalie Stephens (Callicoon, NY; Lebanon, NH: Nightboat Books, 2010). The term 'afterlife' is coined by Hartman, *Lose Your Mother*, 6.

[10] The term 'Maroon' is 'used throughout the Caribbean and the Americas to designate the runaway African slaves who took to the mountains in order to escape enslavement'; it derives from the Spanish 'cimarrón: that is, the non-tamed, nondomesticated animal', Wynter, 'Beyond the Word of Man', 638. Marronage or Marronage, depending on usage, refers to the creation of communities by the enslaved who escaped. For Glissant, it is the most 'widespread act of defiance in that area of civilisation that concerns us', Glissant, *Caribbean Discourse*, 248. Marronage has also been used more broadly to refer to a 'system of thought', as Roberts finds in Glissant's work, for thinking of freedom in late modernity: 'as an economy of survival, state of being, and condition of becoming, from fugitive acts of truancy and attempts at liberation to the constructive constitution of freedom'; it is sometimes used to refer more loosely to the 'lessons one can learn from revolutionary slaves themselves', Neil Roberts, *Freedom as Marronage* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015), 144 and 7.

[11] See Glissant, *Caribbean Discourse*, 248; Cedric Robinson begins his discussion of 'Black movements in America' with the co-emergent anti-slavery maroon revolts in the British, French and Spanish colonies, mapping the transformations in ways of cultural, religious and social being that took place following the 'de jure extinction of slavery', see *Black Movements in America* (New York: Routledge, 1997); on petit marronage (truancy or momentary flight) or grand marronage (establishing maroon communities after escape), see Roberts, *Freedom as Marronage*; cf. P. Khalil Saucier and

destabilisation of modern-colonial episteme that, as Sylvia Wynter has shown, ascribed rational, historical, moral and responsible agency to the 'overrepresented' figure of 'Man' as if it were the human itself.[12] Such overrepresentation constituted the racialised other[13] through 'ontological lack' -- an 'unbearable wrongness of being' -- legitimating enslavement, territorial conquest and colonial settlement.[14] Scholarship on black cultural production, performance, aesthetics -- the black radical tradition more broadly -- has attended to the inseparability of dispossession and revolt in the afterlives of slavery, what Robin Kelley identifies as the 'black radical imagination' and Fred Moten calls the 'resistance of the object', or more recently, '[l]ife which has been stolen steals away…', which reverberates in the title of this piece.[15]

Tryon Woods, *On Marronage: Ethical Confrontations with Antiblackness* (Trenton: Africa World Press, 2015); on the Haitian Revolution, see Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*, 20th Anniversary Edition (Boston: Beacon Press, 2015); Laurent Dubois, 'The Citizen's Trance: The Haitian Revolution and the Motor of History', in *Magic and Modernity: Interfaces of Revelation and Concealment*, ed. Birgit Meyer and Peter Pels (Stanford University Press, 2003), 103–28; C. L. R. James, *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution*, ed. James Walvin (London: Penguin, 2001); Gurminder K. Bhambra, 'Undoing the Epistemic Disavowal of the Haitian Revolution: A Contribution to Global Social Thought', *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 37, no. 1 (2 January 2016): 1–16; Robbie Shilliam, 'Race and Revolution at Bwa Kayiman', *Millennium* 45, no. 3 (1 June 2017): 269–92; on slave rebellions see, Steven Hahn, 'Did We Miss the Greatest Slave Rebellion in Modern History?', in *The Political Worlds of Slavery and Freedom* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2009), 55–114; Errol A. Henderson, 'Missing the Revolution Beneath Their Feet: The Significance of the Slave Revolution of the Civil War to the Black Power Movement in the USA', *Journal of African American Studies* 22, no. 2 (1 September 2018): 174–90.

[12] See, Sylvia Wynter, 'Sambos and Minstrels', *Social Text*, no. 1 (1979): 149–56; Sylvia Wynter, 'The Ceremony Must Be Found: After Humanism', *Boundary 2* 12–13, no. 3–1 (1984): 19–70; Sylvia Wynter, 'Towards the Sociogenic Principle: Fanon, Identity, the Puzzle of Conscious Experience, and What It Is Like to Be "Black"', in *National Identities and Sociopolitical Changes in Latin America*, ed. Mercedes Durán-Cogan and Antonio Gómez-Moriana (New York: Routledge, 2001), 30–66; Sylvia Wynter, 'Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom: Towards the Human, After Man, Its Overrepresentation--An Argument', *CR: The New Centennial Review* 3, no. 3 (2003): 257–337. On fixing exclusively 'political' meanings to art and writing, see Anthony Reed, *Freedom Time: The Poetics and Politics of Black Experimental Writing* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014), 8. On the 'as if' in Wynter, see Greg Thomas, 'Afro-Blue Notes: The Death of Afro-Pessimism (2.0)?', *Theory & Event* 21, no. 1 (13 February 2018): 302.

[13] Race understood 'in terms of social relationality rather than identity' or, indeed, biology; as Hartman argues, racialised 'blackness incorporates subjects normatively defined as black, the relations among blacks, whites, and others, and the practices that produce racial difference', *Scenes of Subjection*, 56–57. For Spillers, too, '[o]ne "becomes" black –neither a phylogeny nor an ontogeny—by virtue of his/her interpellation in total Western Economy', Hortense J. Spillers, 'Or Else...', *The A-Line: A Journal of Progressive Thought* 1, no. 3–4 (30 August 2018), https://alinejournal.com/convergence/or-else/.The production of racial difference entails 'constant perpetuation' through institutional, discursive, infrastructural, cultural and affective structures that maintain the 'barring of non-white subjects from the category of the human', Alexander G. Weheliye, *Habeas Viscus: Racializing Assemblages, Biopolitics, and Black Feminist Theories of the Human* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014), 3.

[14] Wynter, 'Beyond the Word of Man', 641; and 'On How We Mistook the Map for the Territory, and Reimprisoned Ourselves in Our Unbearable Wrongness of Being, of Desêtre: Black Studies Toward the Human Project', in *A Companion to African-American Studies*, ed. Lewis R. Gordon and Jane Anna Gordon (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), 107–18. For a discussion of the significance of this for decolonial ethics, see Louiza Odysseos, 'Prolegomena to Any Future Decolonial Ethics: Coloniality, Poetics and "Being Human as Praxis"', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 45, no. 3 (2017): 447–72.

[15] Robin D. G. Kelley, *Freedom Dreams: The Black Radical Imagination* (Boston, Mass.: Beacon Press, 2002); see, importantly, Fred Moten, *In The Break: The Aesthetics Of The Black Radical Tradition* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), chap. 1; Moten, *Stolen Life*, xii.

Poetics has been thought of as 'an anti-colonial politics itself';[16] here poetic revolt, too, has a wider socio-political meaning, as in Aimé Césaire's 'new science of the word' and Wynter's 'renarration'.[17] Poetic revolt 'responds to the need for replenished social and political imaginations adequate to what in a previous generation would have been called the demand for freedom'.[18] It entails what Kelley calls, after C. L. R. James, 'the effort to see the future in the present', to dream 'freedom dreams'.[19] In this sense, poetics, like poetry itself, is not a 'luxury'; on the contrary, it bears directly upon the act of 'illumination', inflecting the 'quality of light by which we scrutinize our lives', from which flow not only thoughts, concepts, and ideas, but the very possibility of hermeneutic engagement: understanding.[20] And yet, stolen life's poetic revolt does not adhere to modernity's confined constitution of understanding through instrumentality alone, but 'improvisationally passeth understanding…forever in anticipation of modernity and its exhaustion'.[21] Poetic revolt, I argue, is part of ongoing efforts to destabilise the modern-colonial episteme and is intimately connected with the possibility and imagination of radical social transformation, indeed, of the shape and time of futurity. It reimagines the present that excludes others as non-human according to the figure of Man, aiming to make thinkable and inhabitable a single, *other*, world, or a world otherwise, whilst 'hold[ing] multiple worlds'.[22] Importantly, poetic

[16] Robbie Shilliam, 'Civilization and the Poetics of Slavery', *Thesis Eleven* 108, no. 1 (1 February 2012): 113, referring to Robin D. G. Kelley, 'A Poetics of Anticolonialism', in *Discourse on Colonialism*, by Aimé Césaire (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2000), 7–28.

[17] See, Sylvia Wynter, 'The Ceremony Found: Towards the Autopoetic Turn/Overturn, Its Autonomy of Human Agency and Extraterritoriality of (Self-)Cognition', in *Black Knowledges/Black Struggles: Essays in Critical Epistemology*, ed. Jason R. Ambroise and Sabine Broeck (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2015), 184–245. Aimé Césaire, 'Poetry and Knowledge', in *Lyric and Dramatic Poetry 1946-82*, trans. Clayton Eshleman and Annette Smith (Charlottesville: The University Press of Virginia, 1990), xlii–lvi.

[18] Anthony Reed, 'The Erotics of Mourning in Recent Experimental Black Poetry', *The Black Scholar* 47, no. 1 (2 January 2017): 23.

[19] Kelley, *Freedom Dreams*, 9; C. L. R. James, *The Future in the Present: Selected Writings* (London: Allison & Busby, 1977).

[20] Audre Lorde, 'Poetry Is Not a Luxury', in *The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House* (London: Penguin Classics, 2018), 1. The article's reorientation towards poetic *revolt* benefits tremendously from Anna Agathangelou's and Robbie Shilliam's work on poetics. See, Anna M. Agathangelou and Kyle D. Killian, 'Epistemologies of Peace: Poetics, Globalization, and the Social Justice Movement', *Globalizations* 3, no. 4 (1 December 2006): 459–83; Anna M. Agathangelou, 'Bruno Latour and Ecology Politics: Poetics of Failure and Denial in IR', *Millennium* 44, no. 3 (1 June 2016): 321–47. See also Shilliam's discussion of Glissant's poetics in 'Decolonising the Grounds of Ethical Inquiry: A Dialogue between Kant, Foucault and Glissant', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 39, no. 3 (1 May 2011): 649–65. Shilliam, 'Civilization and the Poetics of Slavery', 107, develops a 'poetics of slavery' to interrogate the colonial impulses of civilisation discourse and analysis.

[21] Moten, *Stolen Life*, 20.

[22] Anna M. Agathangelou, 'Making Anew an Arab Regional Order? On Poetry, Sex, and Revolution', *Globalizations* 8, no. 5 (1 October 2011): 583. '…to disrupt the project of particularity that has never been the concern of the colonized', Anna M. Agathangelou and Kyle D. Killian, 'Introduction: Of Time and Temporality in World Politics', in *Time, Temporality and Violence in International Relations: (De)Fatalizing the Present, Forging Radical Alternatives* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016), 19.

revolt pertains to 'the demand…for a share of the future, and a future conceived on different terms' and is both a 'historical and future oriented' endeavour.[23]

Joining the discussion of revolution and resistance in world politics that this special issue convenes, the article, first, puts forward poetic revolt as a necessary companion to these 'keywords', a contiguous or even prior term, which centres the 'asterisked histories of slavery, of property, of thingification, and their afterlives',[24] benefitting from and intersecting with ongoing work in International Relations on slavery's structurations of -- 'remains' -- in the present.[25] In section one, therefore, it engages with the work of Saidiya Hartman, Hortense J. Spillers and Christina Sharpe, aiming not at an exhaustive account, but rather at developing a theoretical orientation of the 'ongoingness' of slavery as a 'grammar of captivity' that nevertheless illuminates the simultaneity and entanglement of structuring violence and poetic revolt.[26] Such simultaneity, it argues additionally, is best illuminated when we attend to the sociopoetic practices of enslaved and post-Emancipation populations: the 'living sociabilities' of stolen life, those fugitive and 'wayward' arts and acts of social living.[27] Second, the article discusses an example of such sociopoetic revolt drawn from Spillers' often overlooked scholarship on homiletics, a term which refers to the study of, and participation in, homilies or sermons;[28] it identifies and discusses key aspects of poetic revolt, such as critical practices of 'fabulation', world-making otherwise, and processes of

[23] Reed, *Freedom Time*, 208 and 215, note 1; on futurity, see, Tina M. Campt, *Listening to Images* (Durham: Duke University Press Books, 2017); Moten, *Stolen Life*.

[24] Christina Sharpe, *In the Wake: On Blackness and Being* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016), 29. On keywords as enquiries into 'vocabulary' and as central to the study of politics, culture and society, see Raymond Williams, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*, Second Ed. (London: Fourth Estate, 1988), 15. This article does not pursue the limits of resistance as a frame, admirably taken up for example by Campt, *Listening to Images*; Tavia Nyong'o, *Afro-Fabulations: The Queer Drama of Black Life* (New York: NYU Press, 2018).

[25] See Alison Howell and Melanie Richter-Montpetit, 'Racism in Foucauldian Security Studies: Biopolitics, Liberal War, and the Whitewashing of Colonial and Racial Violence', *International Political Sociology*, 2019, Online View, doi:10.1093/ips/oly031; Anna M. Agathangelou, 'Bodies of Desire, Terror and the War in Eurasia: Impolite Disruptions of (Neo) Liberal Internationalism, Neoconservatism and the "New" Imperium', *Millennium* 38, no. 3 (1 May 2010): 693–722; Anna M. Agathangelou, 'Slavery Remains in Reconstruction and Development', in *Globalization, Difference, and Human Security*, ed. Mustapha Kamal Pasha (Abingdon, Oxon; New York: Routledge, 2013), 152–65.

[26] Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection*; Hartman, *Lose Your Mother*; Spillers, 'Mama's Baby'; Hortense J. Spillers, *Black, White, and in Color: Essays on American Literature and Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003); Sharpe, *In the Wake*.

[27] See Sylvia Wynter, 'Ethno or Socio Poetics', *Alcheringa : Ethnopoetics* 2, no. 2 (1976): 78–94; for a longer discussion of lived sociabilities, see Nijah Cunningham, 'The Resistance of the Lost Body', *Small Axe* 20, no. 1 49 (1 March 2016): 113–28; Nyong'o, *Afro-Fabulations*; Saidiya V. Hartman, 'Saidiya Hartman Is Carrying Forward the Black Radical Tradition', *E-Flux*, 18 April 2018, https://conversations.e-flux.com/t/saidiya-hartman-is-carrying-forward-the-black-radical-tradition/7833; 'An Unnamed Girl, a Speculative History', *The New Yorker*, 9 February 2019, https://www.newyorker.com/culture/culture-desk/an-unnamed-girl-a-speculative-history; *Wayward Lives, Beautiful Experiments: Intimate Histories of Social Upheaval* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2019).

[28] Hortense J. Spillers, 'Moving on Down the Line', *American Quarterly* 40, no. 1 (1988): 83–109.

resignification and self-representation, through which enslaved and legally emancipated communities developed a posture of 'critical insurgency' that aimed at rupturing the grammar of captivity and at forging critical, futurally-oriented sociabilities.[29] In both of these objectives the article acknowledges concerns to avoid voyeuristic and 'piratic' use of such practices and histories which 'make continuous the colonial project of violence'.[30] The risk remains however that discussing these sociopoetic practices appropriates them as objects to be known.[31] Third, the article discusses the links of poetic revolt, in its specificity in the afterlives of Atlantic slavery, to wider systemic and futural reflections without claiming, at the same time, that the experience of the 'abyss' is generalisable or universal.[32] It reflects on how poetic revolt emerges within, and further reinforces an interstitial, afro-diasporic relational and critical positionality, which Spillers probes through 'the *idea* of Black Culture' and Glissant reads as 'Relation'.[33] Such a critical and futural positionality does not take the modern-colonial order as presupposed,[34] but engenders a 'counter-statement' to modernity that is central to modernity itself.[35] Pluralising our thinking on revolution and resistance, poetic revolt, then, is best seen as a critical meditation on futurity.

'Afterlives of Slavery' and Poetic Revolt

To probe the contours of poetic revolt, in the sense intimated above, requires us to reflect on the notion of 'afterlives' arising in the United States academic context, without losing sight, at the same time, of the plural post-slavery Afro-diasporic contexts, which cannot be reduced to a single national frame or set of experiences.[36] Below I engage with Hartman's, Spillers' and Sharpe's

[29] Ibid.; Nyong'o, *Afro-Fabulations*; Ashon T. Crawley, *Blackpentecostal Breath: The Aesthetics of Possibility* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2017).
[30] Sharpe, *In the Wake*, 117. See Hartman's scathing analysis of the voyeuristic consumption of enslaved performance in the 'orchestrated amusements of the enslaved' such as minstrelsy or melodrama, *Scenes of Subjection*, 36, and 17–48. Also, Lisa Tilley, 'Resisting Piratic Method by Doing Research Otherwise', *Sociology* 51, no. 1 (1 February 2017): 27–42.
[31] Reed, *Freedom Time*, 212.
[32] On a discussion of 'non-provincial' see Roberts, *Freedom as Marronage*. Cf. Glissant, *Poetics*, 3–12.
[33] Hortense J. Spillers, 'The Idea of Black Culture', *CR: The New Centennial Review* 6, no. 3 (2006): 7–28; Hortense J. Spillers, 'The Idea of Black Culture', *Princeton African American Studies*, 19 March 2013, http://aas.princeton.edu/publication/the-idea-of-black-culture/; Glissant, *Poetics*; Édouard Glissant and Manthia Diawara, 'Édouard Glissant in Conversation with Manthia Diawara', trans. Christopher Winks, *Nka: Journal of Contemporary African Art* 28, no. 1 (23 October 2011): 4–19; cf. H. Adlai Murdoch, 'Édouard Glissant's Creolized World Vision: From Resistance and Relation to Opacité', *Callaloo* 36, no. 4 (8 November 2013): 875–90.
[34] Nahum D. Chandler, 'Originary Displacement', *Boundary 2* 27, no. 3 (1 October 2000): 249–86. On vestibular cultural formations see Spillers, 'Mama's Baby'. For an understanding of the modern-colonial order as marked by coloniality, see Aníbal Quijano, 'Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism, and Latin America', trans. Michael Ennis, *Nepantla: Views from South* 1, no. 3 (2000): 533–80.
[35] Spillers, 'The Idea of Black Culture'; Moten, *Stolen Life*, 20.
[36] It is paramount to 'think slavery beyond the United States and conceive of slavery in terms of the entire Americas', Rinaldo Walcott, 'Fanon's Heirs', *Amerikastudien / American Studies* 59, no. 3 (2014): 437. Cf. Annie

historical and analytical work in an attempt to assemble a conceptualisation of 'afterlives' that discloses both their structuring violence and also their generativity of poetic revolt. I also draw on Wynter's probing of sociopoetics to locate the methodological contours of the discussion.

Hartman's *Scenes of Subjection* showed how the focus on legal emancipation and its narrating *as* freedom distracted from a concerted analysis of the elusive character of freedom for the formerly enslaved and their descendants, those who *are* the 'afterlives of property'.[37] Her analyses of the 'non-event of Emancipation' provided an incisive critique of how formal emancipation and the accrual of rights and freedoms 'conferred sovereignty as it engendered subjection', both in the actual elusiveness of freedom and in the gifting of it as debt.[38] Hartman reads historically the distinction between emancipation as a 'legal, legislative, and juridical term' and freedom as a 'condition that is radically different'.[39] For Hartman, slavery's afterlife 'encompasses the fungible and disposable life of the captive/slave' and extends into the post-Emancipation and contemporary eras to produce an 'uneven distribution of death and harm', which includes 'premature death, social precarity, and incarceration' and 'produces a caesura in human populations…a huge pile of corpses'; in other words, the experience of the Middle Passage reverberates in present-day 'post-racial' US society: '[t]he [slave ship] hold continues to shape how we live'.[40] Hartman's aim is not to 'efface the discontinuities and transformations inaugurated by the abolition of slavery' but, rather, to mark the 'entanglements of slavery and freedom', which 'trouble facile notions of progress that endeavor to erect absolute distinctions between' them.[41] Hence, her historical aim is undergirded by an urgent concurrent call to attend to the temporal entanglement of the centuries-long transformation of enslaved Africans (and later African Americans) into fungible commodities and the ongoing disposability of racialised black

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Olaloku-Teriba, 'Afro-Pessimism and the (Un)Logic of Anti-Blackness', *Historical Materialism* 26, no. 2 (30 July 2018): 104. Approximately 5% of enslaved Africans disembarked in the British colonies that would become the US and that the intra-American and domestic slave trades were also significant in this context. On the 'hegemony' of the Atlantic experience of slavery in slavery studies, see Anjali Arondekar, 'What More Remains: Slavery, Sexuality, South Asia', *History of the Present* 6, no. 2 (2016): 146–54.

[37] See, Stephen Best and Saidiya V. Hartman, 'Fugitive Justice', *Representations* 92, no. 1 (1 November 2005): 1–15; Saidiya V. Hartman, 'Venus in Two Acts', *Small Axe* 12, no. 2 (17 July 2008): 1–14. In literature and poetry see, Toni Morrison, 'The Site of Memory', in *Inventing the Truth: The Art and Craft of Memoir*, ed. William Zinsser (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1995), 83–102; Toni Morrison, *Beloved* (London: Vintage, 1997); Dionne Brand, *A Map to the Door of No Return: Notes to Belonging* (Toronto: Vintage Canada, 2002).

[38] Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection*, 134, 134–39.

[39] Walcott, 'Fanon's Heirs', 437.

[40] Saidiya V. Hartman, 'The Dead Book Revisited', *History of the Present* 6, no. 2 (2016): 208, doi:10.5406/historypresent.6.2.0208 brackets added; on violence during Reconstruction, see Spillers, 'Or Else...'; for a critique of 'post-racial', see David Theo Goldberg, *Are We All Postracial Yet?* (Oxford: Polity Press, 2015).

[41] Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection*, 172.

populations contoured by social norms that normalise 'the deaths we are expected to live'.[42] Such temporal entanglement suggests that, for post-slavery subjects, 'time is lived in multiple and simultaneous registers that trouble…the before or after of slavery', illuminating their inhabitation of 'the simultaneity of that entanglement'.[43]

Subsequent scholarship in a wide range of fields continues to explore the 'revenant' legacies of slavery, even though such contributions do not always use the term 'afterlives'.[44] For example, in sociology Loïc Wacquant examines the serial emergence of 'functional surrogate' institutions in post-Emancipation United States, such as Jim Crow, the ghetto and mass incarceration, which were 'genealogically linked' to the system of slavery, showing how these developed to manage the transition from formal slavery and to 'racial domination'.[45] In law, Colin Dayan discusses the legal rituals through which 'slaves were reborn as criminals and translated into "slaves of the state"'.[46] In Science and Technology Studies, moreover, Ruha Benjamin analyses afterlives of whiteness and examines racist systems as 'reproductive systems', 'resurrecting white lives' while 'snuff[ing] out black ones'.[47] In the invocation – actual or not – of 'afterlives', such violence should be thought of as temporally entangled, that is, to have 'occurred before it had occurred' and to illuminate the 'inscribing [of] black death within the texture of the quotidian'.[48]

Over the past decade, what has been called 'Afro-pessimist' scholarship has sutured 'afterlives of slavery' to the notion of 'social death', as initially delineated in Orlando Patterson's *Slavery and Social*

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[42] Lorde, 'Poetry', 3. On the complex ways in which 'slavery remains' in the present, see Anna M. Agathangelou, 'Neoliberal Geopolitical Order and Value', *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 15, no. 4 (1 December 2013): 453–76; cf. Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*, 147.

[43] First quote in Hartman, 'The Dead Book Revisited', 213; second quote in Saidiya V. Hartman, On working with archives: An interview with writer Saidiya Hartman, interview by The Creative Independent, 18 April 2018, https://thecreativeindependent.com/people/saidiya-hartman-on-working-with-archives/.

[44] On 'revenant' and 'revendication', see David Marriott, *Haunted Life: Visual Culture and Black Modernity* (New Brunswick, NJ ; London: Rutgers University Press, 2007); David Marriott, 'Corpsing; or, The Matter of Black Life', *Cultural Critique* 94 (2016): 32–64.

[45] Loic Wacquant, 'From Slavery to Mass Incarceration: Rethinking the "Race Question" in the US', *New Left Review* 13 (1 January 2002): 41–43; cf. Manning Marable, 'Race-ing Justice: The Political Cultures of Incarceration', *Souls* 2, no. 1 (January 2000): 6–11; Ruth Wilson Gilmore, *Golden Gulag: Prisons, Surplus, Crisis, and Opposition in Globalizing California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007); Joy James, ed., *Warfare in the American Homeland: Policing and Prison in a Penal Democracy* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007); Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow* (New York: The New Press, 2012).

[46] Colin Dayan, *The Law Is a White Dog: How Legal Rituals Make and Unmake Persons* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011), 45.

[47] Ruha Benjamin, 'Black AfterLives Matter: Cultivating Kinfulness as Reproductive Justice', *Boston Review*, 11 July 2018, http://bostonreview.net/race/ruha-benjamin-black-afterlives-matter.

[48] First quote in Nahum D. Chandler, 'Between', *Assemblage*, no. 20 (1993): 26; the second in Reed, 'The Erotics of Mourning', 29, brackets added. On such violence as gratuitous, see Steve Martinot and Jared Sexton, 'The Avant-Garde of White Supremacy', *Social Identities* 9, no. 2 (1 June 2003): 180; Sharpe, *In the Wake*, 127.

Death.[49] Patterson's 'transhistorical' account of slavery produced a 'distillation' of slave experience through 'nomothetic' social science, that is, on the basis of a comparative historical-sociological analysis of tens of slaveholding societies across the ages.[50] Alexander Weheliye notes that such an account 'emphasizes mortality at the cost of sociality', which obscures the 'messy corporeality of bare life',[51] as seen in the claim that 'black life is lived in social death'.[52] As Moten argues, reading the afterlives of slavery as overdetermined by social death and 'dereliction'[53] tends to presume an 'incapacity for ontological resistance';[54] for Spillers, too, if a theoretical posture 'governed by a diasporic view of black history from which to commence its narrative *reifies* slavery and colonization as inherent properties in a subject, then the theoretical posture no longer serves as an intellectual technology, or a heuristic device, but, rather, comes to advance an ontological valence'.[55] This tends to 'confuse a conceptual narrative, or a position in discourse, with an actual narrative that will always *exceed* it'[56] and risks occluding the incessant 'black op' of black social life -- that pronounced 'resistance of the object' in the fights against, flights from, and refusals of, the ongoing lived structurations of slavery.[57] Moten's work on black cultural and aesthetic practice, for example, probes the ways in which black social life unsettles its regulation, being 'reducible neither to simple interdiction nor bare transgression'.[58] Slavery's afterlives, then, may be best thought in relation to 'stolen life's' multivalence as 'stolen' and 'stealing' itself away, that is, as *also* marked by 'fugitive movement…[that]…makes black social life ungovernable' or 'wayward'.[59] Indeed, it may be necessary to think more concertedly, initiated in the final section, on how stolen

[49] Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982); few authors, Jared Sexton argues, would 'identif[y] themselves or their work by this term', see 'The Social Life of Social Death: On Afro-Pessimism and Black Optimism', *InTensions Journal*, no. 5 (Fall/Winter 2011): 41, note xii.
[50] Vincent Brown, 'Social Death and Political Life in the Study of Slavery', *The American Historical Review* 114, no. 5 (1 December 2009): 1233–34.
[51] Weheliye, *Habeas Viscus*, 38; cf. Sara-Maria Sorentino, 'The Sociogeny of Social Death: Blackness, Modernity, and Its Metaphors in Orlando Patterson', *Rhizomes: Cultural Studies in Emerging Knowledge* 29 (2016): sec. 4; Laura Brace, *The Politics of Slavery* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2018), chap. 1.
[52] Sexton, 'The Social Life of Social Death', 29, 22; cf. Frank B. Wilderson, *Red, White and Black: Cinema and the Structure of U.S. Antagonisms* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010).
[53] Moten, 'Knowledge of Freedom', 187; cf. Fred Moten, 'The Case of Blackness', *Criticism* 50, no. 2 (2008): 177–218; Fred Moten, 'Blackness and Nothingness (Mysticism in the Flesh)', *South Atlantic Quarterly* 112, no. 4 (1 October 2013): 737–80; Moten, *Stolen Life*. For a discussion of the 'political ontology' of race see Wilderson, *Red, White and Black*; and, Jared Sexton, '"The Curtain of the Sky": An Introduction', *Critical Sociology* 36, no. 1 (1 January 2010): 18.
[54] Moten, *Stolen Life*, 24.
[55] Spillers, 'Or Else...' original emphasis.
[56] Ibid. original emphasis. Cf. Sharpe, *In the Wake*, 134. Related, Greg Thomas is concerned with the reanimation of colonial afro-pessimism as epistemology, see 'Afro-Blue Notes'.
[57] Fred Moten, 'Black Op', *PMLA* 123, no. 5 (2008): 1743–47; Moten, *In The Break*.
[58] Moten, 'The Case of Blackness', 179.
[59] Ibid., brackets added. Hartman's recent work bespeaks this waywardness: '*we were never meant to survive*, and yet we are still here', see 'An Unnamed Girl', original emphasis.

life's poetic revolt contributes to a posture of 'fugitivity' and 'critical insurgency' that destabilises the ontological assumptions of the modern-colonial episteme.[60]

Taking fungibility and injurability as central to slavery's 'afterlives' whilst remaining attentive to poetic disruption within them, requires an engagement with Spillers' discussion of a 'grammar of captivity' as this unfolds in post-Emancipation United States. Her enquiry offers a conceptual topology of 'afterlives' as a symbolic order, which illuminates their radical 'dis/continuity' as a complex entanglement of temporality, marking both their longevity and permutations whilst attentive of their generativity for poetic revolt. Spillers' famous essay 'Mama's Baby, Papa's Maybe: An American Grammar Book' interrogated how public policy and discourse tended toward an analysis of African American social ills that, though acknowledging the history of slavery, occluded the ongoing operations of a 'grammar of captivity'.[61] Spillers' critique of the 1965 Moynihan Report on *The Negro Family: The Case for National Action*, showed how it apportioned blame for black male 'underachievement' in education, employment, life chances, etc., to the female-headed black family, whose assumed structure of matriarchy 'reversed roles of husband and wife'.[62] The Report claimed that such divergence from the family model of 'male leadership' of whites -- and recent immigrant communities -- in American society disintegrated the 'social fabric' of 'lower class Negroes', placing them at a 'distinct disadvantage'.[63] Such a reading 'inscribe[d] "ethnicity" as a scene of negation', discursively weaving 'underachievement' to a 'tangle of pathology'; it echoed what had become a naturalised common sense amongst different segments of society, 'both black and white, oddly enough': namely, that the 'African-American female's "dominance" and "strength"' was a pathological 'instrument of castration'.[64]

Interested in 'gaining the insurgent ground' for this 'female social subject', Spillers interrogated the ways in which the 'New-World, diasporic plight' of the enslaved had marked 'a theft of the body -- a willful and violent (and unimaginable from this distance) severing of the captive body from its motive will, its active desire'; such a context not only results in 'ungendering' -- that 'loss of gender'

[60] On 'critical insurgency', see Spillers, 'Moving On', 93–94; Moten, 'The Case of Blackness', 187; Moten, *Stolen Life*; cf. the original discussion of this in Chandler, 'Originary Displacement'.
[61] Spillers, 'Mama's Baby'.
[62] Daniel Patrick Moynihan, 'The Negro Family: The Case for National Action' (Washington, DC: United States Department of Labor, 1965), 30 and 4–5, https://www.dol.gov/general/aboutdol/history/webid-moynihan (accessed 26 October 2018).
[63] Ibid., Preface (n.p.) and 29.
[64] Spillers, 'Mama's Baby', 66 and 74; see the earlier critique in Angela Y. Davis, 'Reflections on the Black Woman's Role in the Community of Slaves', in *The Angela Y. Davis Reader*, ed. Joy James (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 1998), 111–13. On 'the tangle of pathology', see Moynihan, 'The Negro Family', chap. IV.

in the enslaving dispossession that 'turned *personality* into *property*'[65]-- but also in the historical 'rigidified disorganisation' of the slave family through the principle of *partus sequitur ventrem*, whereby children born to enslaved mothers were themselves commodified and enslaved.[66] Ungendering and the heredity of slave status entrenched a grammar through which enslaved mothers and fathers were 'robbed of the parental right, the parental function'.[67] Enslaved men became removed 'from sight' and 'from mimetic view as a partner in the prevailing social fiction of the Father's name, the Father's law' -- which the Report proclaims to be the norm of American society, whilst the enslaved mother became 'both mother and mother dispossessed':[68] 'enslaveability displaces maternity'.[69] Spillers' analysis of the 'grammar of captivity' contests the Report's account of matriarchy, and its fixing as pathological, to which African-American male 'underachievement' and the assumed crumbling of social fabric were being traced. She illuminates the specificity of the material and psycho-social fortunes of black women and African American communities, furnishing us with a conceptual topology for understanding 'afterlives' as a 'symbolic order' that begins with the 'rupture' of captivity and fosters a 'radically different kind of cultural continuation' through which black lives are syntactically composed.[70] Spillers' discussion centres on the captives' 'body' in which, 'biological, sexual, social, cultural, linguistic, ritualistic, and psychological fortunes join'; it is this 'profound' and complex 'intimacy' of the flesh that the symbolic order attempts to capture and fix with its 'externally imposed meanings and uses', turning flesh into a fungible 'body', into property.[71]

Yet, central to Spillers' conceptual topology are incessant attempts to rupture this very grammar. It is in this grammatical unfolding of black life that poetic revolt itself unfurls, I argue with Glissant in mind, taking shape alongside and within other practices of socio-political resistance, fugitive and maroon movements, as well as cultural production and sociopoetic practice. For Audre Lorde, poetry and poetic revolt are not only 'dream and vision; it is the skeleton architecture of our [black women's] lives', a 'beachhead' that remains when forms regarded as 'real resistance' to

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[65] Spillers, 'Mama's Baby', 67 and 77–78.
[66] 'That which is brought forth follows the womb'; on the disorganisation of slave family form see Davis, 'Reflections', 112. For Sexton, it is this loss of the mother in addition to a loss of the 'motherland' that differentiates colonialism from slavery, see 'People-of-Color-Blindness', 41; on 'natal alienation' see, Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death.*
[67] Spillers, 'Mama's Baby', 78.
[68] Ibid., 80. cf. bell hooks, *Ain't I a Woman: Black Women and Feminism* (London: Pluto Press, 1982), chap. 2.
[69] Jennifer L. Morgan, 'Partus Sequitur Ventrem: Law, Race, and Reproduction in Colonial Slavery', *Small Axe* 22, no. 1 (3 April 2018): 2; cf. Brace, *The Politics of Slavery*, 1.
[70] Spillers, 'Mama's Baby', 68. Glissant, *Poetics*, 7.
[71] Spillers, 'Mama's Baby', 67. On the distinction between flesh and body in Spillers, see Weheliye, *Habeas Viscus*, 40.

dispossession and normalised disposability are thwarted.[72] For Spillers, 'the project of liberation for African-Americans found urgency in two passionate motivations':

> 1) to break apart, to rupture violently the laws of American behavior that make such *syntax* possible; 2) to introduce a new *semantic* field/fold more appropriate to his/her own historic movement.[73]

Such destabilising of grammar and imagining futurity otherwise encompasses multiform practices, which Christina Sharpe has recently termed 'wake work', a term whose Glissantian echoes aim to grasp their unfolding within the ongoing reverberations of the 'wake' of slave ships.[74]

Sharpe pluralises Glissant's conception and visualisation of the wake as a fibril, mobilising the inherent polysemy of 'the wake' to develop an analytic frame for understanding the entanglement of past, present and future, and inter-articulation of dying and/within living, dispossession and/within revolt:

> … the track left on the water's surface by a ship; the disturbance caused by a body swimming or moved in water;…the air currents behind a body in flight; a region of disturbed flow; … the state of wakefulness; consciousness; … in the line of recoil of (a gun); … a watch or vigil held beside the body of someone who has died, sometimes accompanied by ritual observances including eating and drinking; … grief, celebration, memory, and those among the living who, through ritual, mourn their passing and celebrate their life...[75]

Sharpe's compound term 'wake work' thinks together Spillers' conceptual topology regarding the operations of a grammar of captivity with Hartman's concern with temporal entanglement and injurability, whilst also conjuring Glissant's insistence on the simultaneity and interarticulation of dispossession and poetic uprising. Grasping the wake as the tracks left by sailing ships through water and as watchful sitting with the dead centres the reverberations of the transatlantic slave trade and the millions of African deaths in the Middle Passage;[76] whilst the wake as the line of recoil of a gun recalls not only contemporary carceral logics of containment but, importantly, the '*fatal way of being alive*…the constant and perilous exposure of life to injury'.[77] Sharpe analyses how

[72] Lorde, 'Poetry', 3.
[73] Spillers, 'Mama's Baby', 79.
[74] Sharpe, *In the Wake.*
[75] Ibid., 3–11.
[76] See, https://www.slavevoyages.org/assessment/estimates
[77] Marriott, 'Corpsing', 34, original emphasis. On carceral logics see cf. Wacquant, 'From Slavery to Mass Incarceration'; Gilmore, *Golden Gulag.*

living in the wake has its own, historically dictated, 'orthography':[78] its own symbolic, often unspoken, rules through which black lives are 'spelled out' according to 'accepted usage' and in coherence with social signs.[79]

Importantly, however, Sharpe speaks of the urgency in attending to the disturbances of 'flow' -- recall that wake also connotes the disruption of air caused by bird flight – because such disturbances are crucial to the task to 'imagine otherwise'; they signal towards 'anagrammatical' modes of living – that is, in disruption of the grammar – and help grasp more adequately 'new modes of making sensible':[80]

> wake work as a theory and praxis of the wake…I am trying to find the language for this work, find the form for this work. Language and form fracture more every day…I want to sound this language anew, sound a new language…Think the ways the hold cannot and does not hold even as the hold remains in the form of the semiotics of the slave ship hold…[81]

'Wake work' invokes, I argue, a praxis of poetic disruption and futural imagination that insists on afterlives as after*lives*, adjoining the slave ship and bird flight in an attempt to interacticulate ongoing dispossession and poetic revolt: 'I mean wake work', Sharpe clarifies, 'to be a mode of inhabiting *and* rupturing this episteme with our known lived and un/imaginable lives'.[82] However, I suggest that examining these wakeful inhabitations, these interventions in the grammar of captivity, as 'sociopoetics' better illuminates their linkages to poetic revolt. Far from purely reflective or avant-garde quests, practices of wake work are forged in interstices of social living and vernacular and cultural production that concretise fugitive and futural *lived* reflection on the present and the 'past that is not past'.[83]

Wynter called for reversing the neglect of Afro-diasporic sociopoetics within studies of tribal poetry focussed on 'ethnopoetics'.[84] *Black Metamorphosis*, her 1970s unpublished manuscript, also

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[78] I can only note here Sharpe's discussion of orthography as 'dysgraphia of disaster' and the need to think further how it differs and intersects with 'grammar', Sharpe, *In the Wake*, 20–21 and 113.
[79] For a full definition of orthography see, http://www.dictionary.com/browse/orthography?s=t
[80] Sharpe, *In the Wake*, 3, 76, and 113.
[81] Ibid., 19 and 21.
[82] Ibid., 18 original emphasis.
[83] Ibid., 62. For discussion on 'avant-garde' traditions reproducing hierarchies of race, see Erica Hunt, 'Response to Race and the Poetic Avant-Garde', *Boston Review*, (10 March 2015), http://bostonreview.net/poetry/erica-hunt-response-race-and-poetic-avant-garde. See also, however, Moten's complex discussion of the avant-garde in *In The Break*.
[84] Wynter, 'Ethno or Socio Poetics'.

examines the emergence of 'a sociopoetic force that persists despite the imposition of nothingness', highlighting in the lifetimes of slavery 'a recalcitrant form of life that fails to assimilate within either normative conceptions of the human subject or the critique of Western humanism and its invention of man'.[85] Sociopoetics, as Wynter understood it, was the attempt to grasp concretely and historically the generativity of social life in conditions of enslavement and abjection. Practices that emerged in the 'underlife of the slave's life' illuminated the vital sociality of 'man as generator, both of his material and of his social life'; as Nijah Cunningham suggests, 'Wynter describes a regenerative vitality that is irreducible to the abstract form of life that the figure of the slave (a *pieza*) represented from the standpoint of capital'.[86] Wynter identifies important dis/continuties in slavery's afterlives by probing the 'sociopoetic force' that weaves through 'the lived experience of those relegated outside the epistemological constraints that define human life', and which entails 'the practices, sensibilities, affects, attachments, capacities, aspirations, and general rhythms of social life'.[87] Examining both the significance of plantation provision grounds [the 'plots'], in which slaves cultivated food for subsistence, as well as the syncretic rebellion of rhythm – song, music and dance – sociopoetics gleans '[w]hat dwells in the underlife', in the escape into sociality; as Cunningham notes, sociopoetics bespeaks 'something that is danced, lived, participated in, and experientially practiced that we might call black social living'.[88] Here 'living' ordains not only being physically alive but also those innately relational and improvisational moves that 'attempt the heretical actions that our dreams imply'.[89] Amongst these, Wynter speaks of 'species of maroonage, a multiplex of marooning actions, practices, or activity'[90] in which one

[85] Cunningham, 'The Resistance of the Lost Body', 115.
[86] Sylvia Wynter, 'Black Metamorphosis: New Natives in a New World' (Unpublished, New York, N.Y., circa 1975), 548, New York Public Library, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture; cited in Cunningham, 'The Resistance of the Lost Body', 116–17; Cunningham's quote on p. 117.
[87] Cunningham, 'The Resistance of the Lost Body', 115.
[88] Wynter, 'Black Metamorphosis', 548; cited in Cunningham, 'The Resistance of the Lost Body', 117; second quote is Cunningham's, p. 117. For a discussion of 'resistance' in the provision grounds, see also Sylvia Wynter, 'Novel and History, Plot and Plantation', *Savacou*, no. 5 (1971): 95–102. On the rebellion of 'groove', see Katherine McKittrick, 'Rebellion/Invention/Groove', *Small Axe* 20, no. 1 49 (1 March 2016): 79–91; cf. 'visualsonic' resistance, Sharpe, *In the Wake*, 21; notably also, Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*, 1st edition (London: Verso Books, 1993).
[89] Lorde, 'Poetry', 4; 'Heretical' is a term also invoked by Wynter, and more recently, Hartman: Wynter, 'Ethno or Socio Poetics'; Hartman, *Wayward Lives*. Hartman's book was published as this piece was going to press and hence demands more extensive engagement than is possible here.
[90] Greg Thomas, 'Marronnons / Let's Maroon: Sylvia Wynter's "Black Metamorphosis" as a Species of Maroonage', *Small Axe* 20, no. 1 49 (1 March 2016): 69, referring to Wynter, 'Black Metamorphosis'. Thomas discusses Wynter's hesitation about the naming and practices of maroons and marronage. Cf. Gary Wilder, 'The Promise of Freedom and the Predicament of Marronage: On Neil Roberts's Freedom as Marronage', *SX Salon (Small Axe)*, February 2017, http://smallaxe.net/sxsalon/reviews/promise-freedom-and-predicament-marronage-neil-robertss-freedom-marronage.

finds a "'complex attitude" that survived the Middle Passage and a concept of life in which "death was the ground of the regeneration of life"'.[91]

Methodological attentiveness to sociopoetics reveals how '[t]he body is never an empty vessel, or completely open to being named and claimed in toto'.[92] Living sociabilities *within* injurious abjection in the plantations and wider 'black minority experience'[93] post-Emancipation provide, as Hartman says of another historical context, 'an intimate chronicle of black radicalism'.[94] Examining the early 20th century ghetto as a context dis/continuous with the plantation and entailing new forms of 'racial enclosure', Hartman creatively reconstructs, on the basis of official records, statistics and printed news, refashionings of self, mutuality and community by 'colored girls' as 'an art of survival', a kind of 'social poesis' that pertains at one and the same time to internal life, self-representation and the development of creative and fugitive forms of sociality.[95] Both Wynter and Hartman, I argue, attend, albeit differently, to the need to examine poetic revolt in practices of social living across different spatial and historical contexts of the afterlives of slavery; their work probes how such sociopoetics constituted a living and embodied contestation of 'an initial negation of this humanness', brought about by racial and chattel slavery's transformation of humans into property.[96] Importantly, poetic revolts intervened against 'the objectification of the life of the enslaved'[97] and post-slavery subjects whilst predicated on a contestation of modernity's 'freedom discourse', poetically reimagining the future, selfhood and

[91] Cunningham, 'The Resistance of the Lost Body', 117; citing Wynter, 'Black Metamorphosis', 548.
[92] Jayna Brown, *Babylon Girls: Black Women Performers and the Shaping of the Modern* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2009), 61. Scholars such as Moten, Jayna Brown and Daphne Brooks examine black performance in slavery and post-slavery trans-Atlantic diasporic cultural production and exchange. See, Moten, *In The Break*; Fred Moten, *Black and Blur* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2017); Moten, *Stolen Life*; Daphne A. Brooks, *Bodies in Dissent: Spectacular Performances of Race and Freedom, 1850–1910* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006). Such accounts probe how 'the fixity of discursive claims over the corporeal can never be complete' and 'only holds if the power of the word is given sole dominion over physical being', Brown, *Babylon Girls*, 84.
[93] Wynter, 'Black Metamorphosis', 915; cited in Cunningham, 'The Resistance of the Lost Body', 117.
[94] Hartman, *Wayward Lives*, xv. Her earlier *Scenes of Subjection* showed the 'captive body' to be fixed by 'repetitive acts of terror and dominance' through slave whippings and the slave coffle, see Brown, *Babylon Girls*, 84. Her discussion a 'defamiliarizing of black performance'; yet, Nyong'o argues, her discussion is not a disavowal of the 'power of performativity' Nyong'o, *Afro-Fabulations*, 203; cf. Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection*, 56. Hartman acknowledges that in stealing away the enslaved subject's own sociopoetic practices were possibilities for 'contravening the object status of chattel, transforming pleasure, and investing in the body as a site of sensual activity, sociality, and possibility, and last, redressing the pained body' (66).
[95] Using 'critical fabulation', see Saidiya Hartman, 'The Anarchy of Colored Girls Assembled in a Riotous Manner', *South Atlantic Quarterly* 117, no. 3 (July 2018): 469–70; Cf. Campt, *Listening to Images*, 10.
[96] Wynter, 'Ethno or Socio Poetics', 85; Wynter, 'Black Metamorphosis'.
[97] Wynter, 'Black Metamorphosis', 17; Cunningham, 'The Resistance of the Lost Body', 117.

sociality from 'out-from-outside' of modernity's 'terms of salvation' and the hegemony of its self-possessed subject.[98]

This section engaged with the work of Hartman, Spillers and Sharpe to offer an orientation towards afterlives that both acknowledges their violent structurations of the present and illuminates their generativity of poetic revolt. It called for greater attention to sociopoetics, outlined here primarily through Wynter's work, as a praxis of wake work seeking to rupture and transform the grammar of captivity into one of 'black futurity';[99] sociopoetics in this sense affords not only a view of quotidian poetic revolt but how this is part of the 'black radical tradition's ongoing improvisation of "Man"'.[100] The next section turns to Spillers' work on African-American homiletics, a term referring to participation in, and study of, homilies or sermons, as but *one* example amongst a 'range of insurgencies' within and against the grammar of captivity that brings the generativity of poetic revolt into view.[101]

Living Poetic Revolt

This section identifies and discusses three interlinked aspects of the sociopoetic revolt of African-American sermons 'in the wake'. Far from an exhaustive account, the discussion draws on Spiller's work in this area, alongside recent theoretical explorations in black and performance studies, in order to discuss practices of communal 'fabulation', world-making otherwise and resignification, analysing these as an example of enslaved communities' 'first "poetry"'.[102] Together these three aspects suggest that poetic revolt was performed as *lived* and embodied reflection, emerging in the interstices of social living in an interplay of critique and imagination, pastness and futurity; they signal efforts to contest and rework, in 'collective catharsis', signs of sub-humanity and lack and/in the grammar of captivity,[103] marking the emergence of a posture of 'insurgency' intimately connected to futural, social transformation. The discussion offered below has to be engaged with

[98] On the 'freedom discourse' of 'white stateliness' and subject of self-possession, see Sarah Jane Cervenak and J. Kameron Carter, 'Untitled and Outdoors: Thinking with Saidiya Hartman', *Women & Performance: A Journal of Feminist Theory* 27, no. 1 (2 January 2017): 47. On the 'outside', see Moten, 'Knowledge of Freedom', 277. On questioning the 'terms of salvation' in Wynter, see Cunningham, 'The Resistance of the Lost Body', 127.
[99] Campt, *Listening to Images*, 16–17.
[100] Moten, 'Knowledge of Freedom', 279.
[101] Spillers, 'Moving On'. On 'range of insurgencies' see Moten, *Stolen Life*, xii.
[102] Hortense J. Spillers, 'Fabrics of History: Essays on the Black Sermon.' (Ph.D. Diss., Brandeis University, 1974), 3,
[103] Ibid., 4.

four areas of caution in mind, however: first, as Hartman cautions, the scholarly gaze yearns for 'romance', desires an edifying story, especially in a context where the 'force of repression is virtually without limit', potentially causing the sociopoetic practices discussed to 'come to appear as insurgent'.[104] Second, searching for uplift risks politically overdetermining black sociopoetic practice, performance and writing. It may yield a 'preemptive racialized' reading of it as (only) expressive of a political viewpoint or, specifically, as addressing 'race-relations', reducing it to 'one of rejoinder, protest, or commentary, figuring…[it] as reactive rather than productive'; this runs the risk, moreover, of assuming that 'the black text is necessarily oppositional [and]…external to modernity'.[105]Third, practices of fabulation, world-making otherwise, and hermeneutic resignification, as notable aspects of stolen life's posture of 'critical insurgency', are not 'representative' of a homogeneous community; rather, poetic revolt emerges 'intramurally', that is, marked by neither cohesiveness nor unity.[106] Put otherwise, the discussion heeds the concerns over risks of an extractive reading (of any example) of sociopoetic revolt – and the labour of black feminist scholarship and black studies more broadly -- that would put its insights 'to use' by an academy that benefited from 'the spoils of black enslavement and fungibility' in ways that risks continuing 'relations of unfreedom'.[107]

Spillers' analysis of homiletics suggests that, far from a spontaneous 'folklore' practice, the study of sermons must be located as

> an imaginative field of inquiry into the strategies of African survival, evinced on a hostile landscape of social and political praxis…as the African-American's prototypical public speaking, [it] locates the primary instrument of moral and political change within the community. But at crucial times, the sermon not only catalyzes movement, but *embodies* it, is *movement*…Whether or not we encounter the sermon in its customary social context, as the driving words of inspiration and devotion, or in its variously secular transformations and revisions as urgent political address, we perceive it fundamentally as a symbolic form that not only lends shape to the contours and outcome of African-Americans' verbal fortunes

[104] On 'romance', see Hartman, 'Venus in Two Acts', 8; quote in *Scenes of Subjection*, 63. Cf. Jared Sexton, On Black Negativity, Or The Affirmation of Nothing, interview by Daniel Colucciello Barber, *Society and Space*, 18 September 2017, https://societyandspace.org/2017/09/18/on-black-negativity-or-the-affirmation-of-nothing/.
[105] Reed, *Freedom Time*, 7–8.
[106] See, Hortense J. Spillers, 'Black, White, and In Color, or Learning How to Paint: Toward an Intramural Protocol of Reading', in *Black, White, and in Color: Essays on American Literature and Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 277–300; Nyong'o, *Afro-Fabulations*, 180.
[107] Walcott, 'Fanon's Heirs', 438.

> under American skies, but also plays a key role in the psychic configurings of their community.[108]

In the one sense, African-American sermons may be thought of as a particular kind of 'self-address', whose contours emerge as a response to, and are hence confined by, the socio-legal structures and contexts.[109] Yet acknowledging this cannot assume that sociopoetic practices are reducible to their historical and legal regulation by state and societal normativity;[110] rather, sermons as sociopoetic practices and 'texts', much like 'the African-American's relationship to Christianity and the State', are 'marked completely by ambivalence', the structure of which 'constitutes the black person's relationship to and apprenticeship in American culture'.[111] Importantly, ambivalence connotes a vestibular -- from-the-outside -- relationship of African Americans to 'dominant' American culture reverberating with 'emotional distance'.[112] For Spillers, thinking metaphorically through 'ambivalence' is a means to avoid 'closure or *break* in the passage of syntagmatic movement from one more or less stable property to another'; hence, '"ambivalence" remains…a strategy that names the new cultural situation as a *wounding*'.[113] Wounding, though, describes not only the injury of enslavement and its afterlives but also its engendering of 'a mode of insurgent agency, a critical subjectivity…a mode of existence, far from being trapped in social death, is "mystical" and stateless with respect to the order of things'.[114] The sociopoetic practices that the cultural situation of wounding calls forth, therefore, are marked by both their captive situatedness and also their tendency towards grammatical disruption and futural imagination: they evince 'anagrammatical' potentialities.[115] Therefore, Spillers argues that the archive of African American sermons, questioning amongst other things the justification of slavery in the Bible, may bring into view the ambivalent radicalism of this practice in which 'such a relationship [to Christianity and the State] gropes toward a radically alternative program' in all its 'broad and unspoken tensions'.[116] Indeed, for Spillers, homiletical practices are part of a wider 'project of literacy' which captures African-Americans' 'fundamental relationship to dominant culture' as a

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[108] Spillers, 'Moving On', 85–86, brackets added.
[109] Bryan Wagner, *Disturbing the Peace: Black Culture and the Police Power after Slavery* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2009), 21.
[110] Moten, *Stolen Life*, 19 and 27.
[111] Spillers, 'Moving On', 84 and 86.
[112] Ibid., 93. Perhaps the best way to grasp this is to recall W. E. B. Du Bois's discussion 'double consciousness' W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (New York: Dover Publications, 1994). On revolutionary Christianity, see Cornel West, *Prophesy Deliverance! An Afro-American Revolutionary Christianity* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002).
[113] Spillers, 'Moving On', 93 original emphasis.
[114] J. Kameron Carter, 'Paratheological Blackness', *South Atlantic Quarterly* 112, no. 4 (1 October 2013): 595.
[115] Sharpe, *In the Wake*, 76; Cf. Campt, *Listening to Images*, chap. 1.
[116] Spillers, 'Moving On', 84 and 86, brackets added.

form of 'historical apprenticeship' in which, I argue, poetic revolt takes shape and of which it is a part.[117]

Let us now discuss more specifically, albeit briefly, three interrelated aspects of homiletic poetic revolt as noted above. First, the study and attendance of sermons often involved the invention of enslaved communities' very history. In these sermonic texts, the reader, 'in participatory readership, is *given* a history at the same time that s/he seeks to fabricate one'.[118] Fabricating history was necessary because 'slavery made the past a mystery, unknown and unspeakable',[119] so much so that Spillers calls African-Americans 'America's only historically amnesiac group'.[120] Both familial and communal history proved immeasurably elusive for post-slavery diasporic subjects, as Dionne Brand recounts: 'My grandfather never remembered our name and perhaps therefore, in a large sense for me, our way. I balanced on the word at the tip of his tongue…For the name he could not remember was from the place we could not remember. Africa'.[121] The fabrication of history in this familial sense brings to mind the wake as a gathering of family and community to honour the dead, to celebrate, ritually observe and mark their lifetimes.[122] This pertains not only to those left behind in the wresting of Africans from their communities but also to those who died in passage or -- insurgent or ailing -- were jettisoned overboard during the approximately 52,000 slave journeys in the long centuries of the transatlantic and intra-American slave trades.[123] What overwhelmingly remains of these familial and personal histories are the ledgers, embarkation and

[117] Ibid., 85; on 'apprenticeship', see Spillers, 'The Idea of Black Culture', 2006, 17. And, indeed, the fugitive space of the sermons provided crucial 'equipment' for slaves' and freed blacks' literacy in the narrower sense of learning to read and write. Spillers, 'Moving On', 89; Spillers speaks of a 'fundamental obsession' to speak even though the law did not allow it, see Spillers, 'Black, White, and In Color', 299. Stealing away to attend prayer and sermons, and also to study them in companionship is a 'play upon this originary act of theft that yields the possibilities of transport as one was literally and figuratively carried away by one's desire', writes Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection*, 66. Stealing away to learn to read and write transgressed against the prohibition of literacy, which heightened after slave rebellions such as the Southampton insurrection of 1831 led by Nat Turner, in the aftermath of which states 'renewed their bans on teaching literacy to slaves, banishing anything that might fortify slave knowledge and resolve… "clos[ing] every avenue by which light might enter their minds…"'. Robinson, *Black Movements in America*, 38; citing, Joshua Coffin, *An Account of Some of the Principal Slave Insurrections, and Others, Which Have Occurred, or Been Attempted, in the United States and Elsewhere, during the Last Two Centuries. With Various Remarks* (New York: The American Antislavery Society, 1860), http://archive.org/details/accountofsomeof00coff; literacy was blamed for a variety of revolts in the Caribbean and Americas, see for example, Dubois, 'The Citizen's Trance', 104; Glissant, *Caribbean Discourse*, 249; Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection*, 65–67.

[118] Spillers, 'Moving On', 90, original emphasis.

[119] Hartman, *Lose Your Mother*, 14.

[120] Spillers, 'Fabrics of History', 3.

[121] Brand, *A Map to the Door of No Return*, 5, 3–6.

[122] Sharpe, *In the Wake*, 11.

[123] An estimated 41,000 voyages departed African points of embarkation, whilst the intra-American slave trade adds an estimated 11,000 voyages, see https://www.slavevoyages.org/voyage/about (date accessed 6 May 2019). Cf. M. Nourbese Philip, *Zong!* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 2008); Fred D'Aguiar, *Feeding the Ghosts* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1997).

disembarkation statistics and their commodified valuation-representation of the enslaved and the dead: the 'mathematics' of black life.[124]

However, the project of fabricating history and memory is contentious, as well as fraught with methodological difficulties arising in part from the entanglement of temporality discussed above: '[h]ow might we understand mourning … [w]hen the injuries not only perdure, but are inflicted anew?'[125] Those who are missing, however, could affect a haunting, which Avery Gordon understands as 'the critical analytic moment…when the repression isn't working anymore the trouble that results creates conditions that demand re-narrativization'.[126] Fabricating history and memory in this sense is demanded by 'the contextual needs of the enslaved' in emotive, affective, social and histori(ographi)cal terms.[127] Modes of communal 'fabulation' of histories erased from memory and archive afford a necessary and speculative 'recovery of the near or distant past': necessary, if one is 'to relish fully the present, for the experience of the present, striped of its roots in time, yields only hollow delights'[128] and speculative in the sense of 'uncovering and/or preserving abyssal histories'.[129]

In part, Glissant's call for a 'prophetic vision of the past'[130] arises from the need to unwork the injurious 'exclusion from the grand narrative of the past' in the sense of historiography and the narratives of History with a capital H; an erasure belied by the transportation of 'selves and bodies…through and across this History/history…[who] were in fact implicated in this History'.[131] And yet, though 'history is how the secular world attends to the dead',[132] that is, through critical-historiographic undertakings, in the homiletic context a different imaginative attending to the dead and to the missing might have been possible. Fabricating history in the midst of congregation recalls practices of 'fabulation' that disrupt both the schema of thingifying representation of blackness and black people as numbers in the slave ship's hold and also their

[124] Katherine McKittrick, 'Mathematics Black Life', *The Black Scholar* 44, no. 2 (1 June 2014): 16–28; cf. Hartman, 'Venus in Two Acts'. On 'communities of memory' forged out of struggle, see Brown, 'Social Death and Political Life in the Study of Slavery', 1248.
[125] Saidiya V. Hartman, 'The Time of Slavery', *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 101, no. 4 (2002): 758.
[126] Avery F. Gordon, 'Some Thoughts on Haunting and Futurity', *Borderlands* 10, no. 2 (2011): 3.
[127] Brown, 'Social Death and Political Life', 1245.
[128] Édouard Glissant, *Monsieur Toussaint: A Play*, trans. J. Michael Dash (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2005), 15–16.
[129] Roberts, *Freedom as Marronage*, 155.
[130] Glissant, *Caribbean Discourse*, 64.
[131] Katherine McKittrick, 'I Entered the Lists…Diaspora Catalogues: The List, The Unbearable Territory, and Tormented Chronologies—Three Narratives and a Weltanschauung', *XCP: Cross Cultural Poetics* 17 (2007): 21; Glissant, *Caribbean Discourse*, 75.
[132] Hartman, *Lose Your Mother*, 18.

archival 'loss'.[133] It encourages us to think about '[s]omething like black history, with its lowercased improper and unpropertied (property) valuation, quartered in History's master house', which may yet be 'evasive, of the reductive structures of the Historical subject's structures of recognition'.[134]

Readers of sermons might be thought of as fabulists, imagining themselves and those 'who are missing' as 'a people to come'.[135] Fabulation is the 'creative re-enchantment of the present as seen by the illumination that the imminent future…can throw upon the past…'; marked by a complex 'black polytemporality'[136] it recalls that '[w]hat is at stake in pastness…is the future, the process of becoming'.[137] 'Fabulation' in the interstices of black social living unfolds in multiple registers and entails a host of creative, imaginative, performative and speculative acts that engage in the active elaboration of sociality and community.[138] Yet, whilst this crafted an encompassing vision of enslaved Africans who came from diverse African communities and their descendants, in that elaboration '"community"…becomes potentiality; an unfolding to be attended'.[139] Fabulation, then, is involved in the 'invention of a people', those missing in the Middle Passage, missing from History and missing from the 'regulatory ideal' of the human as Man.[140]

Second, such fugitive fabulation arises as a constellation of invention and critique that is a crucial part of world-making otherwise. For the enslaved as fabulists, reading and interpreting the gospel entailed the transgressive incorporation of the 'stolen man / woman' into its message. Such inclusion not only elaborates an African American 'community' otherwise, it contests its dehumanisation and exclusion, through a concurrent reimagination of new worlds as they might be remade: '[i]f the captive could make the Gospel "speak" his or her state, then the subversion of dominance was entirely possible. So powerful a force must therefore reduce the world to a single human order'. The 'community articulated in these documents [sermons] becomes, at times,

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[133] On the epistemological implications of enshrining 'archival loss or absence as the very marker of slave histories' see Arondekar, 'What More Remains', 147.
[134] Jeramy Decristo and David Marriott, 'Black Critical and Cultural Theory', *The Year's Work in Critical and Cultural Theory* 24, no. 1 (1 January 2016): 107.
[135] Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta (Minneapolis: University of Minesotta Press, 1997), 215–17; Nyong'o, *Afro-Fabulations*, 82.
[136] Nyong'o, *Afro-Fabulations*, 125 and 23.
[137] Hazel V. Carby, 'Foreword', in Michel-Rolph Trouillot*, Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2015), xiii.
[138] Nyong'o, *Afro-Fabulations*, 13–19.
[139] Spillers, 'Moving On', 89–90. See also the discussion in Smallwood, *Saltwater Slavery*, 118–20. 'Potentiality' is 'not to be confused with mere possibility', see Sexton, On Black Negativity.
[140] First quote in Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, 217; second quote in Tavia Nyong'o, 'Unburdening Representation', *The Black Scholar* 44, no. 2 (1 June 2014): 76.

a systematic elaboration of a particular historical order that one makes up as s/he goes along, with whatever comes to, and is already at hand…'.[141] In this way, fabulation and world-making intersect with each other: community itself unfolds through fabulation within fugitive living sociabilities that engage in futural world making otherwise. Congregational socialities, then, promote an imaginative and critical posture regarding the future and future worlds, as well as serving devotional purposes.[142] 'Between worlds stands the sermon',[143] writes Spillers, in that world-making in the context of the sermons engages the narrative of the gospel to rupture the enclosure of enslavement and subsequent permutations of racial domination. Reflecting specifically on the practice and evolution of Black Pentecostalism over the course of the twentieth century, Ashon T. Crawley, too, argues that its sensorial, devotional and social practices be read as a 'critical performative intervention into the western juridical apparatus of violent control, repression, and yes, premature death' and that in these spaces and performances we see not so much 'the ongoing emergence of the new', which assumes linear time, but the 'production of the *otherwise*, and shows the sending forth of otherwise possibilities already enacted, already here'.[144]

Crawley's analysis, following Moten and others, illuminates that performance in the gestural, affective and spiritual economies of sermons is constitutive rather than a 'secondary question of meaning'.[145] The embodied performative is intimately tied to the critical-reflective: the embodiment and living-through-ness of sermons offered a 'feast of hearing' where 'the listening ear becomes the privileged sensual organ, as the sermon attempts to embody the Word'.[146] Here, Tina Campt's discussion of how 'sound can be felt: it both touches and moves people' comes to mind, such that listening to the sermon and reading it out loud in private and communal study becomes a 'haptic form of sensory contact'.[147] Sound, breath, noise, gesture and movement reveal 'a certain lawless, fugitive theatricality' to be 'essential to black life', through which living itself

[141] All quotes in Spillers, 'Moving On', 85–93.
[142] On congregational socialities and becoming, see Louiza Odysseos, 'Ethics of/in the Flesh: Phenomenology and Reparative Sociogeny in Decolonizing Struggles' (paper presented at the International Studies Association Annual Convention, San Francisco, 1-4 April, 2018).
[143] Spillers, 'Moving On', 94.
[144] Ashon T. Crawley, 'Blackpentecostal Breath', *The New Inquiry*, 19 July 2017, https://thenewinquiry.com/blackpentecostal-breath/; cf. Crawley, *Blackpentecostal Breath*, 2017.
[145] David Marriott, 'Introduction: Black Experimental Poetics', *The Black Scholar* 47, no. 1 (2 January 2017): 1; Spillers, 'Fabrics of History', 4–5.
[146] Spillers, 'Moving On', 84.
[147] Campt, *Listening to Images*, 6.

unfolds.[148] It is in this sensorial context and by this 'mode of discourse' that 'African-Americans envisioned a transcendent human possibility under captive conditions'.[149] Yet it is worth recalling that poetic world-making takes 'form in passage', within the grammar of captivity authored in the Middle Passage, carrying 'the trace of the commodity and the weight of refusal' through which 'another world is being prepared' whilst 'the already existing world is radically redescribed'.[150]

Finally, sermons as engagements in fabulation and world-making simultaneously highlight the possibilities for resignification of anti-black signs and the elaboration of 'new semantic field[s]'.[151] The sermons provided 'a ground for hermeneutical play in which the subject gains competence', an ability to interpret, manipulate and refigure 'systems of signs and their ground of interrelatedness'.[152] Practices of resignification recall Wynter's analysis with how the historical 'invention of race' signified 'natives' and the 'savage black' as the *inversion* of a singular 'concept of Western man': they 'existed as a sign' of ontological lack that in turn facilitated their negation and harm under that sign.[153] Scholarship studying contestations of racialising signification argues, however, that 'it is the very exception of blackness and queerness from the humanist standard that produces the possibility of imagining humanity otherwise'.[154] Therefore, both the context and content of sermons engaged in hermeneutical play, in modes of resignification aiming to denaturalise the normative racialisation of blackness as the inverted sign of 'Man',[155] as part of a wider destabilisation of an imperial valuing and de-valuing signification that is a central component of a global 'normative culture of blanchitude'.[156] The participation in, and study of, sermons cannot, then, be grasped as a strictly devotional practice but also must be situated in the wider and radical contestation of such human-negating signs in the 'order of discourse',[157] an intervention into 'epistemic representation'. [158]

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[148] Moten, *Stolen Life*, 111; citing Zora Neale Hurston, 'Characteristics of Negro Expression', in *Negro: An Anthology*, ed. Nancy Cunard (London: Wishart, 1934), 39–46. See also, Patricia Liggins Hill and Bernard W. Bell, eds., *Call and Response: The Riverside Anthology of the African American Literary Tradition* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1998).
[149] Spillers, 'Moving On', 84.
[150] Moten, *Stolen Life*, 194, 197 and 206.
[151] Spillers, 'Mama's Baby', 79.
[152] Spillers, 'Moving On', 89.
[153] Wynter, 'Ethno or Socio Poetics', 83. On the 'invention of race' see Quijano, 'Coloniality of Power'; Wynter, 'Unsettling the Coloniality of Being'.
[154] Nyong'o, *Afro-Fabulations*, 25.
[155] Ibid., 80; cf. Nyong'o, 'Unburdening Representation'.
[156] Wynter, 'Sambos and Minstrels', 150.
[157] Wynter, 'Beyond the Word of Man', 640–41.
[158] Discussing Spillers' corpus, Nahum D. Chandler, 'The African Diaspora', *Palimpsest: A Journal on Women, Gender, and the Black International* 3, no. 1 (2 May 2014): 2.

In what ways do sermons, in the process of resignification, evince the noted 'creative negation' of language, that is, 'the enactment of subversive speech acts, gestures and social practices antithetical to the ideals of enslaving agents'?[159] Anti-black socio-political contexts necessitated vernacular creativity and 'subterranean forms of expression',[160] often characterized by what Nathaniel Mackey calls 'a movement from noun to verb', which captures the 'countering, contestatory tendencies' of attempts to resist 'the keeping of black people "in their place"'.[161] Reading Zora Neale Hurston who, in the 1920s-30s, studied the use of 'verbal nouns' in African-American folklore and expression, Mackey notes 'the privileging of the verb, the movement from noun to verb, [which] linguistically accentuates action among a people whose ability to act is curtailed by racist constraint'.[162] The same movement from noun to verb is noted in Césaire's invention of the verb '*marroner*', meaning to 'escape like slaves', in his 1955 poem of the same title.[163] Hermeneutic play and resignification disrupted the semiotics of 'Man' and of the slave ship hold in attempts to construct a new semantic field that paralleled slaves' flight from captivity -- stolen life's stealing itself away – a simultaneous 'escape from order and its impositions…the experience of transgressing and reconstructing culture'.[164] Spillers suggests that this subversive character of language takes a particular form in homiletic contexts across distinct Christian denominations: on the one hand 'Christianity, in its ability to stand in for "civilization," "patriarchy," "hierarchy," "enlightenment," "progress," "culture" -- a series of lexical items that inaugurate one of the grammars of "othemess"-- renders a text for the dominant culture', whilst, on the other hand, and at the same time, 'sermons provide a strategy of identity for persons forced to operate under a foreign code of culture' in attempts to offer 'a certain reading/hearing of history' that 'ordains struggle, or movement as the key text of human community in general and Africa-American community in particular'.[165] In other words, the hermeneutic marronage of sermons in the archives

[159] Roberts, *Freedom as Marronage*, 5; on 'creative negation' drawing on Cesaire, see David Marriott, 'Response to Race and the Poetic Avant-Garde', *Boston Review*, 10 March 2015, http://bostonreview.net/poetry/david-marriott-response-race-and-poetic-avant-garde; on Christianity, see Robinson, *Black Movements in America*, 98–102.
[160] Robinson, *Black Movements in America*, 98.
[161] Nathaniel Mackey, 'Other: From Noun to Verb', *Representations*, no. 39 (1992): 52, doi:10.2307/2928594.
[162] Ibid., 53 brackets added; cf. Hurston, 'Characteristics of Negro Expression'.
[163] Cited in Mackey, 'Other', 52. In the poem, Césaire distances himself from those in the Communist Party, who had been calling for a return to traditional metres and forms, which the Haitian poet René Depestre had also supported. See, *Le Verbe Marroner,* translated as 'The verb *marroner* / for René Depestre' Aimé Césaire, *Aimé Césaire, The Collected Poetry*, trans. Clayton Eshleman and Annette J. Smith (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 368–71.
[164] Alejandro De Oto, 'Escapes and Displacements', *Scribd*, accessed 24 November 2018, https://www.scribd.com/document/230653662/Escapes-and-Displacements.
[165] Spillers, 'Moving On', 90 and 96.

under examination by Spillers offered experience in the craft and process of resignification, a critical and futural reimagination of life and communal fortunes through interventions into the grammar of captivity.

The three elements of homiletic sociopoetics in the lifetimes and afterlives of slavery discussed in this section illuminated the fugitive emergence of poetic revolt through practices of fabulation, world-making otherwise and resignification which, taken together, mark a posture of 'critical insurgency' towards the grammar of captivity as the syntactical unfolding of black life. Critical insurgency is one posture of wake work, of anagrammatical sociopoetic praxis, that seeks to transform the grammar of captivity into one of futurity.[166] The final section of the paper concludes with a brief discussion of how such an insurgent posture may be thought in relation to systemic thinking on the modern colonial order, broadly understood.

Vestibularity, Poetic Revolt and Systemic Critique

This final section discusses the links of poetic revolt toward the grammar of captivity to systemic social transformation more explicitly. By way of conclusion it recalls Spillers' and Glissant's reflections, in different registers, on the emergence of a positionality that embodies the posture of 'critical insurgency' in its intersecting elements, some of which were discussed in the preceding section. It concludes by calling for continued examination of, first, the relation between poetic revolt in the afterlives of slavery and a wider systemic view of modernity through Spillers' discussion of 'black culture', the cultural 'vestibularity' of which -- that is, its being set at a distance by dominant culture – advances a posture of critique and imagination; second, how this posture aligns with the development of a 'stateless' perspective towards modernity and its episteme. Lastly, how we might continue to probe claims to a simultaneously non-provincial and yet non-generalisable exemplarity that this discussion of poetic revolt may uphold.

For Spillers 'black culture'[167] is shaped by its cultural 'vestibularity' -- a vestibule being a foyer, an entrance hall – an outside or even outsider positionality, as it emerged through its being kept at a distance from/by the dominant order that profited from its legal enslavement and subsequent

[166] On black futurity and capture, see Campt, *Listening to Images*.
[167] For a discussion of the difficulties with the term 'Afro-diasporic', see Lewis R. Gordon, 'African-American Philosophy, Race, the Geography of Reason', in *Not Only the Master's Tools: African American Studies in Theory and Practice*, ed. Lewis R. Gordon and Jane Anna Gordon (London: Routledge, 2005), 4–5.

racialised subjugation.[168] Indeed, black culture developed, Spillers suggests, 'in the penumbra [shadow] of the official cultures that…we could quite rightly call modernity'.[169] To speak in this way about the shadow of modernity does not suggest that the lifetimes and afterlives of slavery were outside of modernity; on the contrary, it highlights how modern culture 'is actually predicated on its others so much so that we can detect no time of priority and succession in this calculus of motives, but a simultaneity of one and other, the same and the difference, through and through'.[170] Nahum D. Chandler puts it even more forcefully: 'just how ironically central to all that we might wish to name as modern is that which appears to lie at its periphery, that which seems to flow along marginal passageways'.[171] It is this emergence at a forced, yet constitutive, distance that gives afro-diasporic culture its 'analytical property', its orientation towards *poetic* dissidence in the wider sense given in this article, as a 'disruption or disturbance from inside modernity's social logic and organization'.[172]

Mobilising W. E. B. Du Bois and Herbert Marcuse, Spillers argues that black culture's vestibular formation meant that 'it could, by virtue of the very act of discrimination, *become* culture, insofar as, historically speaking, it was forced to turn its resources of spirit toward negation and critique'.[173] This necessitated a conception of itself as 'an *alternative* statement, as a *counter*statement to American culture/civilization, or Western culture/civilization, more generally speaking' that provoked its self-reflexive 'cultural vocation as the *space* of "contradiction, indictment, and the refusal"'.[174] This may be grasped, in part, as highlighting the ways in which the afterlives of slavery produce 'a historical sensibility sceptical of the notion of progress' and encourage a probing of 'the space of the interval' as 'the chasm between the no longer and the not yet…the temporal lag between the promises of modernity and the realization of these promises'.[175] In other words, the very living through what we might call the yet-to-come-ness of freedom, and the sociopoetic practices that

[168] Spillers, 'Mama's Baby', 74; see J. Kameron Carter's comments in Duke Franklin Humanities Institute, *The Black Outdoors: Fred Moten & Saidiya Hartman at Duke University* (Durham, NC, 2016), minute 10.03, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t_tUZ6dybrc.
[169] Spillers, 'The Idea of Black Culture', 25, brackets added.
[170] Ibid., 21.
[171] Chandler, 'Originary Displacement', 254. Cf. Bryan Wagner, 'Global Souths', *American Quarterly* 63, no. 2 (16 June 2011): 392.
[172] Spillers, 'The Idea of Black Culture', 25; Carter, 'Paratheological Blackness', 589.
[173] Spillers, 'The Idea of Black Culture', 26, brackets added.
[174] Ibid., 25, original emphasis; citing, Herbert Marcuse, 'Remarks on a Redefinition of Culture', *Daedalus* 94, no. 1 (1965): 193.
[175] Saidiya V. Hartman, 'Introduction', in *The Suppression of the African Slave-Trade to the United States of America (The Oxford W. E. B. Du Bois)*, by W. E. B. Du Bois, ed. Henry Louis Gates Jr (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), xxviii.

this engenders, coalesce in a critical and imaginative set of postures that have a resistive disposition towards 'the putatively ennobling' modernist terms of humanity through self-possession and mastery.[176] The historical experience of being 'refused permission to be part of this world'[177] is conceived by Spillers as forging a 'cultural and historical apprenticeship' towards both its own 'projects of liberation' but also, crucially, towards modernity and futurity itself.

At the same time, the space of the interval 'opens a powerful critical reflection on its *own* [Afro-diasporic culture's double consciousness] historical production' in the evolving system of domination that 'enable as both a responsibility and a freedom a powerful *historial* sense', a kind of vocation of poetic critique towards modernity and 'being as such'.[178] As Wynter puts it, '[t]he incredible inventiveness of black culture', its sociopoetic manifestations, one example of which was taken up in the preceding section, 'is not to be understood outside the imperative task of transformation, of counter resistance to the resistance of the Real world, to the quest of the marked excluded blacks to affirm themselves'[179] in a range of political, cultural and semantic 'projects of liberation' against alienation in the colonial and slavery contexts. Regarding wider critical comportment to modernity that this provides, Nahum Chandler argues that black culture's very positioning affords 'another view of system or the systemic', a perspective that does not take the system as 'assumed or presupposed'[180] but which is fuelled by 'a vision of a future world and what might be'.[181] Indeed, another meaning of a vestibular condition arises here, in that the term also refers to medical conditions of the inner ear that cause disorientation and dizziness in those affected, a disorientation which, taken in a socio-political and cultural frame, alters the perspective through which the normality of the world is viewed and experienced.[182] Black culture's critical systemic view engenders '[n]ot just a specific knowledge, appetite, suffering, and delight of one

[176] Fred Moten, 'Taste Dissonance Flavor Escape: Preface for a Solo by Miles Davis', *Women & Performance: A Journal of Feminist Theory* 17, no. 2 (1 July 2007): 218; Carter, 'Paratheological Blackness'.
[177] W. E. B. Du Bois, *Dusk of Dawn: An Essay toward an Autobiography of a Race Concept* (New York: Schocken Books, 1968), 26–27; on being a 'problem', see Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk*; Lewis R. Gordon, 'Existential Dynamics of Theorizing Black Invisibility', in *Existence in Black: An Anthology of Black Existential Philosophy*, ed. Lewis R. Gordon (New York: Routledge, 1997), 69–79.
[178] Chandler, 'Originary Displacement', 275 and note 33, original emphasis. 'Historial' refers to thinking about 'being as such'.
[179] Wynter, 'Sambos and Minstrels', 149.
[180] Chandler, 'Originary Displacement', 259 and 262.
[181] Hartman, *Wayward Lives*, xv.
[182] See, 'Symptoms', https://vestibular.org/understanding-vestibular-disorder/symptoms (accessed 10 March 2019). Sexton speaks of this in terms of his own intellectual practice, see On Black Negativity.

particular people, not only that, but knowledge of the Whole, greater from having been at the abyss and freeing knowledge of Relation within the Whole'.[183]

This may help us explore the complex meaning of 'apprenticeship': '[t]he diasporic cultures in question, then, have been summoned to *unmake* the conditions of alienation'.[184] Yet, the historical conditions that call diasporic cultures to the 'unmaking' of alienation also render this unmaking

> simultaneous with the actual exploiting the force of it [alienation] in order to make new…Since we cannot easily separate these imperatives from each other, we would have to say that New World black cultures, as well as their parallel formations in other parts of the globe, are not only Creole forms adopted from the implements, both material and imaginative, of the near-at-hand, but that they are also "schizophrenic," if by that we mean compounded of a disposition that carries both its *statement* and *counterstatement,* that would both undo alienation and constitute its own standpoint.[185]

Hence, an explicit self-understanding of black diasporic cultures through the 'disalienation/alienation axis', makes 'black culture' worthy of examination as a 'conceptual object and as a practical devise toward the achievement of social transformation':[186] 'a theoretical object—for thought'.[187] Therefore, as a 'devise' for social transformation 'black culture' remains a 'putative object', a complex fugitive and dispossessed 'reclamation of the critical edge, as one of those vantages from which it might be spied': a possibility yet to come and a political necessity.[188] Here, Spillers is thinking with Du Bois and Marcuse to render "'culture as transcending…toward historical possibilities", in other words, as "'a vital space for the development of autonomy and opposition'".[189] Regarding the latter, persecution and fugitivity forge a critical ethos and perspective towards the system whilst simultaneously being employed in the articulation of futurity, marshalling the sense of the yet-to-come towards 'imagining future anterior freedoms', towards a political animation of the future perfect tense imagining that which 'will have to have

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[183] Glissant, *Poetics*, 8.
[184] Spillers, 'The Idea of Black Culture', 25.
[185] Ibid.
[186] Ibid., 25 and 8.
[187] Chandler, 'The African Diaspora', 3.
[188] On black culture as a putative object, see Spillers, 'The Idea of Black Culture', 19 March 2013; quote in Spillers, 'The Idea of Black Culture', 26.
[189] Spillers, 'The Idea of Black Culture', 16 and 19; citing Marcuse, 'Remarks on a Redefinition of Culture', 192–94. If for 'dominant' culture the 'cultural imaginary does not *speak* its meaning, is content to be mute of explanation… From this vantage, there are, perhaps, only [black] *cultures*', p. 12, brackets in original.

happened'.[190] The historical experience and material histories of slavery -- what Glissant calls 'the abyss' – was a context of 'normative violence, coercive labor, and the virtually absolute crush of the everyday struggle for existence', that induced a set of relations and postures in which 'its subjects could imagine, could *dare* to imagine, a world beyond the coercive technologies of their daily bread'.[191] Hence, black culture arises out of 'impediment as well, the predicaments that bring fugitive spirit into being'[192] in an 'incessant inhabitation of the practices of freedom, the resolute commitment to thinking beyond limit and boundary, yet by way of limit and boundary'.[193] Freedom here comes to connote neither a final destination nor 'an eschatology that envisages freedom as an overcoming, as the other side of domination, or as an end of constraining determinations';[194] rather, freedom becomes aligned to sociopoetic revolt, taking 'form in passage' in a way that 'improvises through horror'.[195]

In its reflection on its own historical conditions of emergence, black culture manifests 'in irreducible entanglement with the terms and powers of modernity', such that its counter-statement 'is indissolubly linked to a statement of its own'; as a reflection on past and present and a subversive and imaginative relation to the future, it is animated by, and engenders, 'nonstatist, nonstatic, anti- and anteperspectival sociality'.[196] This, Moten suggests, is not reducible to the kind of 'statelessness' that may be lamented as a condition, as in political theory and practice, but rethinks statelessness as a 'perspective':[197] such an entanglement of injury and poetic revolt positioned Afro-diasporic cultural formations in a critical relation to – indeed, a tendency to refuse -- the 'salvific' terms of modernity and its notions of law and property in the colonial and settler colonial projects, living these as fundamentally 'an injustice, a mercurial and violent companion to their humiliations…' and bearing 'ongoing stateless witness to the incoherences of white stateliness, witness to the fraudulent universalities of its freedom discourse'.[198] Moten's term 'vaga/bondage' potentially captures the sustained and iterative reflection and praxis of being vagabond *within* conditions of subjection, emerging out of being refused whilst being in-corporated, being state-

[190] First quote in Weheliye, *Habeas Viscus*, 130; second quote in Campt, *Listening to Images*, 17.
[191] Spillers, 'The Idea of Black Culture', 25 original emphasis.
[192] Mackey, 'Other', 58.
[193] Nahum D. Chandler, 'Introduction: Dry and Heavy: Or, Another Poetics and Another Writing—of History and the Future', *CR: The New Centennial Review* 15, no. 2 (7 October 2015): 3.
[194] David Scott, *Refashioning Futures: Criticism after Postcoloniality* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 82.
[195] Moten, *Stolen Life*, 194; second quote in Moten, 'Knowledge of Freedom', 275.
[196] Moten, *Stolen Life*, 19–20 and 26.
[197] Ibid., 25; Moten is thinking here with and against Wagner, *Disturbing the Peace.*
[198] First quote in Robinson, *Black Movements in America*, 20; second quote in Cervenak and Carter, 'Untitled and Outdoors', 47.

less whilst being subject of and subjected to the state: an 'escape-in-confinement'.[199] Statelessness as a perspective, however, marks not only a positionality in relation to domestic legal and political order; it bespeaks a wider, systemic 'outness itself'[200] that affords 'knowledge of Relation within the Whole'.[201] Spillers and Glissant, then, read afro-diasporic positionalities as 'a solicitation beyond existence as given'.[202]

This suggests, moreover, that this wider contestation is not only of (a particular) state but a very unworking of assumptions of liberal notions of subjectivity.[203] This entails a process of becoming 'unmoored from the axiomatics of (self) possession',[204] a supplanting of modernity's 'Man', indeed of its subjectivist and statist ontological commitments, best captured by Glissant's enigmatic statement that 'departure' in the 'open boat' is 'the moment when one consents not to be a single being and attempts to be many beings at the same time'.[205] For Glissant, '[t]he Africans in the New World—African Americans, but also the Antilleans, Brazilians, etc.—escaped the abyss and carry within them the abyss's dimension. And I think the abyss's dimension is not, contrary to what one might believe, the dimension of Unity, but rather the dimension of Multiplicity'.[206] Afro-diasporic culture, then, in Spiller's and Glissant's differing meditations, marks a positionality born of 'that interstitial drama that marks the paradoxical subject position that is a nonsubject position, the subject position of nonbeing' such that 'the "middle" in "Middle Passage" is—in its refusal of stabilization from either shore, the shores of beginnings or those of destiny—existence in the middle itself.[207]

This article initiated an enquiry into poetic revolt within the ongoing reverberations of transatlantic slavery. It probed reflections within black studies and black feminist thought on the 'afterlives of slavery' in order to offer a conceptualisation of the multiform entanglements of past and present, captivity and revolt, pastness and futurity, the abyss and the praxis of wake work. It examined one example of sociopoetic practice in African-American sermonic texts, and discussed three

[199] Moten, *Stolen Life*, 280 (fn 9) and 282 (fn 7). Second quote in Moten, 'Taste Dissonance Flavor Escape', 217.
[200] Comments by Sarah-Jane Cervenak in Duke Franklin Humanities Institute, *The Black Outdoors*, minute: 5.42.
[201] Glissant, *Poetics*, 8. For a critique of 'epistemic privilege based on identity claims of distance from power', see Bat-Ami Bar On, 'Marginality and Epistemic Privilege', in *Feminist Epistemologies*, ed. Linda Alcoff and Elizabeth Potter (New York: Routledge, 1993), 97.
[202] Chandler, 'The African Diaspora', 5.
[203] Walter Johnson, 'Agency: A Ghost Story', in *Slavery's Ghost: The Problem of Freedom in the Age of Emancipation*, by Richard J. Follett, Eric Foner, and Walter Johnson (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011), 8–30.
[204] Cervenak and Carter, 'Untitled and Outdoors', 48.
[205] Glissant and Diawara, 'Édouard Glissant in Conversation with Manthia Diawara', 5.
[206] Ibid.
[207] Carter, 'Paratheological Blackness', 593–94; citing Chandler, 'Between'.

interconnected aspects of fabulation, world-making otherwise and resignification. It suggested that the after*lives* of slavery stand always and at the same time in *apposition* to poetic revolt; here, the term apposition recalls the ways in which 'afterlives' and 'poetic revolt' re-signify each other, entailing both the reverberations of the hold and the inventive and critical capacities of stolen life. The article offered a discussion of how the vestibular becoming and insurgent posture of 'black culture', as well as the ensuing perspective of statelessness, begin the task of locating the centrality of poetic revolt to radical social transformation, affording a positionality that we may describe as 'nonprovincial';[208] I use this term in the sense of offering a view that contains openings towards systemic questioning, rather than to argue for a universalisation of this vestibular experience as a viewpoint without location, as in the example of 'arrow-like' colonising universalism.[209] To contain the poetic, critical and futural postures that emerge out of the 'abyss' as delimited to their particularity would 'shroud the significance of the liminal and interstitial'.[210] Rather, this initial engagement illuminates the need for continued discussion on how this positionality tends towards 'yielding the sense of possibility beyond the limit of given world (of horizon, of civilization, of forms of social and historical existence in general)'.[211] Or, in Glissant's words,

> Peoples who have been to the abyss do not brag of being chosen. They do not believe they are giving birth to any modern force. They live Relation and clear the way for it, to the extent that the oblivion of the abyss comes to them and that, consequently, their memory intensifies…For though this experience made you, original victim floating toward the sea's abysses, an exception, it became something shared and made us, the descendants, one people among others. Peoples do not live on exception. Relation is not made up of things that are foreign but of shared knowledge. This experience of the abyss can now be said to be the best element of exchange.[212]

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Acknowledgements:

[208] Wilder, 'The Promise of Freedom'.
[209] Glissant, *Poetics*, 12.
[210] Roberts, *Freedom as Marronage*, 174. Cf. bell hooks, 'Choosing the Margin as a Space of Radical Openness', *Framework: The Journal of Cinema and Media*, no. 36 (1989): 15–23.
[211] Chandler, 'The African Diaspora', 3.
[212] Glissant, *Poetics*, 8.

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